Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault

Overview Briefing

May 2004

Secretary Rumsfeld's February 5, 2004 Direction

- **Review how the department handles treatment of and care for victims of sexual assault, with particular attention to any special issues that may arise from the circumstances of a combat theater**
- **Address reporting of sexual assaults, including availability of private channels for reporting in combat theaters**
- **Consider what briefings may need to be given to deploying and redeploying service members**
- **Report due within 90 days**

Task Force Charter

- **Review DoD, Services, and Combatant Commands' sexual assault policies/programs**
- **Determine DoD-wide rate and major characteristics of reported sexual assaults for calendar years 2002 & 2003**
- **Assess if care and support provided to victims was timely and effective—in US and in CENTCOM Area of Operation**
- **Recommend any necessary changes**

Task Force Review

- **Analyzed sexual assault incidence, demographics, and disposition data from Services**
- **Evaluated sexual assault policy and program information from OSD, Services, and Combatant Commands**
- **Visited 8 US installations (2 per Service) and 10 CENTCOM sites (Kuwait & Iraq)**
- **Conducted VTCs with 3 PACOM Sites (Korea)**
- **Personal contact with more than 1300 individuals**

Findings

Broadly Characterized

- DoD policies and standards need to focus on sexual assault
- Services' stovepipe policies need to be integrated for effective prevention and response
- Commanders need guidance, resources and emphasis on prevention and response
- Victim response capabilities need more resources and uniform guidance
- Efforts to hold offenders accountable need to be made more transparent

Recommendations

- **Establish a single point of accountability for addressing sexual assault matters**
- **Discuss leadership responsibilities at May Combatant Commanders Conference**
- **Fill gaps in sexual assault information through DoD-wide communication outlets**
- **Convene a summit to develop strategic courses of action on critical, unresolved issues**

Recommendations

- **Develop DoD policies for prevention, reporting, response, and accountability**
- **Establish an Armed Forces Sexual Assault Advisory Council**
- **Provide manpower and fiscal resources to implement required policies and standards**
- **Develop an integrated strategy for sexual assault data collection**
- **Establish program evaluation, quality improvement, and oversight mechanisms**